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YSTRADGYNLAIS RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL . .

REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
AND
SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1937

Ystradgynlais Rural District Council.

REPORT

of the

Medical Officer

and

Sanitary Inspector

for the Year

1937

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To the Chairman and Members of the Ystradgynlais Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

We beg to submit to you our Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1937.

1.—The District consists of two parishes, viz:—
Ystradgynlais Higher and Ystradgynlais Lower.

2.—The area of each parish is as follows:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	9,016 acres
Ystradgynlais Lower	13,182 acres

3. The population of the District according to the 1931 Census was as follows:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	1,627
Ystradgynlais Lower	10,251
	11,878

4. The population of the entire District according to the mid-year return of the Registrar-General was 11,380.

5. The estimated population at the end of 1937 was as follows:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	1,750
Ystradgynlais Lower	10,550
	12,300

6. The number of inhabited houses in 1937 was 2,705 as compared with 1936 which was 2,586. This jump has been caused by a recount of the houses now on the Housing List and not by the progress of one year.

7. The Rateable Value of the District and the sum represented by a penny rate of both parishes at the end of 1937 was as follows:—

	Rateable Value £		Penny Rate £
Ystradgynlais Higher	5,579	...	17
Ystradgynlais Lower	27,442	...	98
	33,021		115

8. Ystradgynlais Higher is more rural in nature than Ystradgynlais Lower. It extends along the valley of the Tawe and includes part of Abercrave, with the hamlets of Penycae, Penwyllt, and Colbren.

A Sewerage scheme is in preparation to deal with the remainder of this area, viz., Ystradgynlais Higher.

Its chief industries are Mining, Limestone Quarrying and Agriculture.

9. Ystradgynlais Lower is mostly Urban in nature and much more thickly populated. The hamlets which have grown up at Bryn Road and Llest of over forty houses; at Wind Road—Croesffyrdd, fourteen houses, and at Cae'r-bont,—Is-y-rhos, of twenty-five houses have much relieved the previous overcrowding. These houses are all tenanted at very reasonable rents and are built and maintained in good sanitary conditions, and having been built on good fertile soil, are well endowed with gardens which are so acceptable to the tenants. These gardens, with very few exceptions are put to best advantage by careful cultivation by the tenants.

UNSATISFACTORY DWELLINGS

10. There are yet many unfit and condemned houses with tenants who live in hope of redemption from such unhealthy dwellings, and although the Council has made big strides in the direction of wiping out unhealthy dwellings, yet these undertakings take time.

The chief industries of Ystradgynlais Lower are Coal mining, Tinplate manufacture, Brick making and Agriculture.

The two collieries which now embrace the entire coal-mining industry of this district give steady employment to the miners engaged there.

The tinplate trade, which has occasionally shown hopes of a revival of its former standard, still suffers from depression. The Yniscedwyn tinplate works, recently fitted up with up-to-date, costly machinery, has made a steady advance, and considering the depression of trade throughout the country is making a good effort at revival.

Brickmaking in the district still continues at low level. Let us hope that an early improvement in this business may soon be noticeable.

11.

BIRTHS

	Males	Females	Total	Rate per thousand
Live Births:				
Legitimate	86	78	164	14.39
Illegitimate	2	2	4	.35
	<hr/> 88	<hr/> 80	<hr/> 168	<hr/> 14.74
Still Births:				
Legitimate	7	3	10	.88
Illegitimate	1	0	1	.08
	<hr/> 8	<hr/> 3	<hr/> 11	<hr/> .94

Table of Births as registered, sex and rate per thousand population for ten years from 1928 to 1937 inclusive:

Year	Population	Males	Females	Total	Rate per thousand
1928	12,300	127	117	244	19.83
1929	12,160	116	105	221	18.11
1930	11,970	108	106	214	18.46
1931	11,878	95	86	131	16.16
1932	11,760	79	108	187	16.01
1933	12,000	87	90	177	14.75
1934	11,840	75	106	181	15.28
1935	11,720	95	84	179	15.27
1936	11,490	109	82	191	16.63
1937	11,380	88	80	168	14.75

From this table it will be seen that the Birth Rate still remains low as it shows a gradual decline from about 20 per thousand population ten years ago to 14.75 births per thousand for the year gone by.

DEATHS

12. 111 Deaths were registered in the district, viz.,

Males	60
Females	51

Deaths at Institutions: Males 15; Females 19.

Deaths of women at childbirth: Nil.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year: Males, 4; Females, 2; or 35 per thousand live births.

TRANSFERABLE DEATHS

Inwards	13
Outwards	32

The following is a list of deaths as registered during the year, 1937, with nine previous years in comparison:—

Year	Population	Males	Females	Total	Rate per thousand
1928	12,300	76	69	145	11.71
1929	12,160	64	62	126	10.36
1930	11,970	73	77	150	12.53
1931	11,878	78	64	142	11.91
1932	11,760	67	79	146	12.41
1933	12,000	76	70	146	12.17
1934	11,840	70	52	122	10.31
1935	11,720	73	50	123	10.49
1936	11,490	68	43	111	9.66
1937	11,380	60	51	111	9.75

As shewn in this table, the death rate per 1,000 has been nearly stationary for the last four years.

13. Table of deaths as registered during 1937 with a complete analysis of the Causes of Deaths which occurred within that year as follows:—

	Male	Female
Whooping Cough	—	—
Diphtheria	1	—
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	5	4
Other Tuberculosis	—	1
Cancer	6	5
Diabetes	2	2
Cerebral Haemorrhage	2	5
Heart Disease	16	7
Other Circulatory Diseases	1	1
Bronchitis	2	4
Pneumonia	3	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	3	—
Peptic Ulcer	—	1
Appendicitis, Diarrhoea	—	—
Other Digestive Diseases	1	—
Acute Chronic Nephritis	1	2
Other Puerperal Causes	—	—
Congenital Debility	—	—
Senility	2	6
Suicide	—	1
Other Violence	6	—
Other Defined Diseases	5	7
Cirrhosis of Liver	—	—
Causes Ill Defined	—	—
Premature Birth	2	1
Influenza	2	2
	60	51
		Total 111

GENERAL RÉSUMÉ

14. I would like to draw your attention this year to several facts which this report brings out.

During the year we had epidemics of Influenza, Scarlet Fever and during the early months, one of Diarrhoea and vomiting. The latter attacked persons of all ages and although there were no deaths, it nevertheless produced a great deal of incapacity leaving the patient in a very debilitated condition.

Of the 57 cases of Scarlet Fever no deaths were recorded, the cases being of a mild type. Nowadays, the old type of Scarlet Fever is rarely seen, due, so the authorities state, to a loss of virulence in the germ itself. It is noteworthy that running concurrently with the Scarlet Fever epidemic was the prevalence of sore throats in children which did not produce a rash. Indeed it has now become a common

observation and such cases should be isolated in the same way as Scarlet Fever.

After this rather gloomy survey it is a pleasure that again this year no case of puerperal death has been recorded.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

15. **Dr. W. F. W. Betenson**, Medical Officer of Health for Breconshire, pays professional visits to this District.

16. **Infant Welfare Centres.** There are four Infant Welfare Centres established in the district, viz., Cwmtwrch, Ystradgynlais, Abercrave, and Colbren.

The attendances at these Centres show how much their teachings have been appreciated, and the improved general health of those children is eloquent testimony of the good work done at the Centres.

17. **Home Nursing.** There are Nursing Associations constantly operating in each of those districts. All these centres maintain a well equipped service. Grants are made to these Nursing Associations by the County Council.

18. **Midwives.** Number of Midwives practising in the area: There are four practising Midwives in the district. These Midwives are fully qualified and give general satisfaction. Three of these act for the Nursing Association, and one nurse practises as a private nurse.

19. **National Health Insurance** which has operated extensively throughout the entire District still works satisfactorily.

20. **Poor Law Medical Out-Relief.** Work under this heading will, in a measure, come under the National Health Insurance Scheme.

21. **Laboratory Facilities.** Examinations of pathological and bacteriological specimens are made at the special departments of Swansea General Hospital.

22. **Legislation in Force.** A complete list of adopted Acts appeared in Report for year ended December, 1932.

23. **Hospitals.** Infectious Diseases Hospitals: This matter is still under discussion with the respective County Councils of Brecon and Glamorgan. Temporary arrangements are in force.

24. **Maternity and Nursing Homes.** When required the maternity and nursing homes at Swansea are utilised.

25. **Maternal Mortality.** No cases of maternal mortality have been recorded.

26. **Institutional Provision** for Unmarried Mothers is made for those cases at Brecon Poor Law Institution.

27. **Institutional Provision** for the care of Mental Defectives. Adequate accommodation and provision are made at the Mid-Wales County Hospital, Talgarth, Brecon.

28. **Ambulance Facilities** are supplied by the local Ambulance Association which provide two ambulances of the latest type.

29. **Local Government Act, 1929.** The question of the Isolation Hospital still has the attention of the Council.

30. **Ophthalmia Neonatorum.** One case notified, treated at Swansea Hospital. Recovered with vision unimpaired.

31. **Cancer.** Facilities for Radium treatment are given at Swansea Hospital and a few selected cases are treated there every year.

32. **Tuberculosis.** The Welsh National Memorial Association hold a Clinic fortnightly in Church Terrace, Ystradgynlais, under the supervision of Dr. Jordan.

33. **Orthopaedic Treatment for School Children.** Clinics are held at Yniscedwyn School under the County Council and visited by Mr. A. O. Parker, Orthopaedic Surgeon to the County Council.

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1937.

34. The estimated number of dwelling houses:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	406
Ystradgynlais Lower	2608
Number of Schools within the district	10
Number of Cowsheds, Dairies and Milk Shops	95
Number of Workshops	30
Number of Slaughter houses	8

35. Dwelling houses with Private water supply:—

(a) Ystradgynlais Higher	270
(b) Ystradgynlais Lower	1807
(c) Cwmtwrech Joint Water Scheme	389

36.	Number of Dwellinghouses:—	
	With baths	904
	With water closets	2013
	With slop water system	49
	Pail and privy system (outlying districts chiefly)	350
37.	Number of Schools:	
	With private water supply	10
	On the water carriage system	9
	On the pail or primitive system	1
38.	Inspections:	
	Inspections and re-inspections made under the Housing Acts, 1909–1936 and also the Public Health Acts 1875–1936 in general.	
	Inspection and re-inspections of premises ...	3777
	Inspections of workshops	129
	Inspections of dairies, cowsheds and milk shops	134
	Inspections of private slaughterhouses	141
	Inspections of schools	55
39.	Nuisances:—	
	Nuisances arising from drains	26
	Insufficient and defective sanitary conveniences	14
	Dampness in walls	19
	Other nuisances—various	13
40.	Summary of Improvements Effected:—	
	(1) Open areas constructed around dwellinghouses	21
	(2) Dampness in walls of dwelling houses remedied	33
	(3) Troughing provided and repaired	26
	(4) Adjacent and dwelling areas paved and repaved.	108
	(5) House roofs repaired	49
	(6) Base of chimneys remedied, also parapet walls	28
	(7) Main walls of dwelling houses coated with cement	44
	(8) Houses provided with a private water supply	18

(9) Houses with water fittings repaired ...	63
(10) Existing houses where sanitary conveniences were provided	18
(11) Number of drains reconstructed	39
(12) Accumulations of manure removed ...	14
41. Notices Served:—	
Preliminary Notices	129
Statutory Notices	10
42. Drains Constructed:—	
Recognised schemes	5
Main drains	5
Branch drains	139
43. Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk Shops:—	
Number of cowsheds on Register	107
Number of milk sellers on Register	95
Number of inspections	134
Number of defects	19
Nuisances arising from manure heaps	8
Cowsheds to lime wash	5
44. Slaughterhouses:—	
Number of slaughterhouses on Register	3
Number of “licensed” slaughterhouses	6
Number of Registered slaughterhouses	2
Number of inspections	87
Number of defects	1
Nuisances from insufficient lime washing ...	1
Nuisances from want of cleanliness	1
45. Workshops:—	
Number of workshops on Register	32
Number of inspections	123
Nuisances from overcrowding	—
Nuisances from want of cleansing	1
Nuisances from limewashing overdue	1
Nuisances from ventilation—indifferent	—
46. Housing Acts, 1930–1936	
Number of dwelling houses inspected	83
Number of inspections and re-inspections ...	166
Number of ill-conditioned dwellinghouses ...	42
Number of houses that require considerable repairs and reconditioning	42

Number of houses represented to the Council for demolition under Section 19 and “Closing Order” under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930, and moreover under Section 10 and Section 12 of the Housing (Slum Clearance) Act, 1936	38
Number of dwellinghouses or parts thereof including basement rooms which are occu- pied as dwellings represented to the Council with a view to serving “Closing Orders”	3

47.—**The General Character of Defects.** Aspect: An ill-aspect in relation to the compass and in consequence ill-health. Site: Damp sites and devoid of sub-soil drainage; foundations devoid of concrete, the absence of a damp proof course inserted between the ground and the upper walls to prevent dampness by capillary attraction rising in the walls; main walls too thin and friable and in exposed situations, main walls erected adjacent to the strata necessitating open areas, base of chimneys instead of lead flashings being inserted to overlap stepwise in the brickwork is protected by a fillet of cement only—this defect with parapet walls also is invariably not infrequent; insufficient lap allowed for slates when roof covering; insufficient troughing with improper spouting; rainwater pipes connected with drains instead of discharging to a gully trap—thus trapping the air in the drain just below the eaves. Soil pipes and drain upcast pipes too short, should be at least two feet above the eaves, window sills unthroated—chimneys with no fire places in bedrooms (1) to maintain normal and uniform temperature during illness, (2) to improve ventilation, (3) to burn scraps of food, &c., after patient therein suffering from an infectious disease. Insufficient height in room, resulting in the agencies from respiration such as organic matter and carbonic acid (CO₂) polluting the air of the rooms at breathing point.

48. **Disinfection.** The number of rooms fumigated after infectious diseases: 10.

SCAVENGING

49. The Council's administrative area is divided into two parishes, viz.,

Ystradgynlais Higher,

Ystradgynlais Lower.

Ystradgynlais Higher is divided into two sections, viz., Colbren also Caehopkin and Penycae. At Colbren the collection of house refuse was made four half days weekly, whereas Caehopkin and Penycae collection of refuse was made six days weekly.

During the year the number of loads collected at the former was 377, whereas the latter number of loads collected was 863.

Ystradgynlais Lower, likewise, is divided into three sections, viz., Abercrave, Ystradgynlais and Cwmtwrch. The collection of refuse and street sweepings at Abercrave was made on six days weekly.

Cwmtwrch Section. Collection of house refuse and street sweepings within this section is made six days weekly—likewise the Ystradgynlais section where urban conditions exist. Six days weekly are employed for the purpose of house and street refuse collections.

The estimated loads collected during the year within the Ystradgynlais Lower Parish were 4,333 loads.

The Council have four excellent refuse disposal sites where "Controlled" tipping is carried on, a method with which the Ministry of Health is highly favourable.

50. BUILDINGS ERECTED IN 1937

	Ystradgynlais		Total
	Higher	Lower	
Dwelling houses	9	24	33
Bungalows	5	4	9
Additions	1	9	10
Flats	0	0	0
Garages	0	16	16
Other buildings	0	8	8
Cowsheds	0	1	1

51. SCHOOLS CLOSED OWING TO EPIDEMICS

School	From	To	No. of Days	On account of
Gurnos Council Mixed and Infants'	13/1/37 ...	22/1/37 ...	10 ...	Influenza
Ynyseedwyn Council Mixed and Infants'	15/1/37 ...	29/1/37 ...	15 ...	Influenza
Penrhos Council Mixed and Infants'	15/1/37 ...	29/1/37 ...	15 ...	Influenza
Cynlais Council Mixed and Infants'	15/1/37 ...	29/1/37 ...	15 ...	Influenza
Cwmtwrch Council Mixed and Infants'	18/1/37 ...	29/1/37 ...	12 ...	Influenza
Glanrhyd Mixed Infants' ...	18/1/37 ...	29/1/37 ...	12 ...	Influenza
Glyntawe Council	1/2/37 ...	12/2/37 ...	12 ...	Influenza
Colbren Council	12/2/37 ...	26/2/37 ...	15 ...	Measles
Ynyseedwyn Council Infants'	28/4/37 ...	21/5/37 ...	24 ...	Measles
Penrhos Council Infants' ...	28/4/37 ...	21/5/37 ...	24 ...	Measles
Caehopkin Council Mixed and Infants'	24/5/37 ...	4/6/37 ...	12 ...	Measles
Abercrave Council Infants' ...	24/5/37 ...	4/6/37 ...	12 ...	Measles
Penycae N.P.	8/6/37 ...	18/6/37 ...	11 ...	Measles

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS

52. **Milk Supply.** The Public Health Acts with regard to the prevention of Tuberculosis are applied to the distribution of milk in the district. Constant and careful supervision of cowsheds, dairies and milk utensils is made, and the distributors and milkers are clean and attentive to the sanitary requirements. Repeated tests are made and supplies are found satisfactory.

53. **Meats and Other Foods.** Meats and other food-stuffs are continually being inspected and supervised where possible by the Sanitary Inspector. Considerable attention is given to this important section by frequent inspections of slaughter-houses and any diseased organs are destroyed.

54. **Adulteration.** No cases of adulteration have been discovered.

55. **Prevalence of, and Control Over, Infectious and other Diseases:**

- (1) Where Tuberculosis cases are diagnosed in the district, they are immediately reported to the County Medical Officer of Health, and submitted to the Tuberculosis Physician for examination, who prescribes sanatorium treatment to suitable patients.
- (2) Hospital accommodation. See paragraph 23.

- (3) Vaccinations—Primary and re-Vaccination. There were 80 successful vaccinations, including the re-vaccinations. A number of objectors failed to procure the necessary exemption before the child reached the age of four months.
- (4) Non-notifiable Acute Infectious Diseases. The teaching staffs of schools continue to give due intimation of every epidemic affecting their pupils, and the names and details of contacts.

NOTIFIABLE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1937.

56. Notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1937.

Diphtheria	5
Pneumonia	9
Erysipelas	1
Scarlet Fever	57
Puerperal Fever	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0
	72

57. **Prevention of Blindness:** Hospital treatment has been given

58. HOME OFFICE FORM 572.

	Inspections		Number of Written Notices		Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	0	.....	0	.....	0
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	32	.....	0	.....	0
Workplaces (other than Outworks premises)	0	.....	0	.....	0
	32				
Defects found in factories, etc.					nil
Outwork in unwholesome premises, Section 108					nil

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS

59. In a general way, contamination or pollution of local rivers and streams is watched, and prevented where possible. Bathing cannot be recommended at certain points.

RAINFALL FOR 1937

60. The following particulars, as indicated, have been very kindly supplied by Miss Lily Williams, Wern House, Ystalyfera.

Month	Total Depth: Inches		Greatest fall in 24 hours Date	Inches	Number of days with .01 or more recorded
January	9.87	.....	13	1.97	23
February	10.76	.....	3	2.04	26
March	3.77	.....	12	.81	19
April	4.18	.....	20	.83	13
May	2.99	.....	23	.75	13
June	4.02	.....	14	1.25	14
July	3.69	.....	23	.63	17
August	1.26	.....	16	.36	8
September	4.48	.....	16	1.08	20
October	3.54	.....	30	1.01	11
November	4.53	.....	30	1.67	9
December	5.23	.....	13	1.18	18
Total	58.32				191

Rain gauge: Diameter of Funnel, 5 inches; height of top above ground 1ft. 6ins.; above sea level 240 feet.

ANNUAL RAINFALL.

From 12 months ended 31st December	Inches
1928	95.00
1929	75.78
1930	80.57
1931	71.23
1932	71.59
1933	53.21
1934	68.35
1935	70.29
1936	60.26
1937	58.32
	704.60
Average for last 10 years	70.46
Average for last 44 years	68.41

Rain fell on 191 days in 1937.

The following particulars, as indicated, have been kindly supplied by Mrs. H. L. Davies, Post Office, Penwyllt.

Month	Total depth :		Greatest fall in 24 hours		Number of days with .01 or more recorded	
	Inches		Date	Inches		
January	..... 10.52	.....	6	..... 1.52	.....	21
February	..... 10.66	.....	3	..... 1.78	.....	22
March	..... 3.74	.....	13	..... .54	.....	15
April	..... 6.04	.....	17	..... 1.13	.....	14
May	..... 2.65	.....	23	..... .71	.....	13
June	..... 3.70	.....	5	..... .75	.....	13
July	..... 4.82	.....	23	..... .79	.....	21
August	..... 1.51	.....	13	..... .61	.....	7
September	..... 3.97	.....	16	..... .94	.....	18
October	..... 3.91	.....	30	..... .83	.....	13
November	..... 2.99	.....	30	..... 1.10	.....	13
December	..... 5.93	.....	1	..... 1.20	.....	17
						<hr/>
						60.44
						<hr/>
						187

Rain gauge:: Diameter of funnel, 5 inches; height of top above ground, 1 foot; above sea level, 900 feet.

We are, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

H. R. STUBBINS, Medical Officer of Health

G. J. REES, Sanitary Inspector,

C.R.I.S., M.R.S.I., M.S.A., (London by Exam.).

